

*Leyman (A.S.)*

THE  
PURIFICATION AND DISINFECTION  
OF  
THE SYSTEM

BY A PROPER USE OF  
FRESH-BURNED CHARCOAL AND PURE AIR

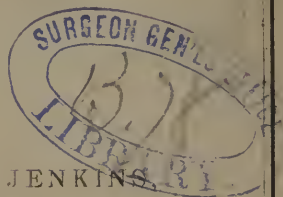
BETTER THAN POISONING IT FOR THE  
PREVENTION AND CURE OF THE GREAT  
MAJORITY OF DISEASES.

BY A. S. Leyman

NEW YORK:  
PRINTED BY EDWARD O. JENKINS

No. 20 NORTH WILLIAM STREET

1863.



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REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF THE LAND OFFICE

FOR THE YEAR 1890

ALBANY, N. Y., 1891

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## USES OF FRESH-BURNED CHARCOAL.

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SEVERAL years ago, the writer of this published a pamphlet (not for sale, but merely a few hundred copies for private circulation), entitled "*Uses of Charcoal*," in which he stated what he had then frequently seen proved, that dysentery, cholera infantum, summer complaint of children, and other diseases caused by breathing impure air, or drinking foul water, are easily prevented, and infallibly cured, by a proper use of fresh burned charcoal, or charcoal that has not been left exposed after being burned, so as to absorb impurities from the air or other sources.

Within the last eight years, several hundred cases have been reported to us where no other remedy was used, and we have never yet heard of a single case where it failed to purify and restore the patient.

It is true, that where the air has been very impure and hot, the disease in the cases of one or two young children while teething, has after a few days returned, and it has been deemed advisable to call in the aid of a disinfecting ventilator, which furnishes a constant current of pure air. The charcoal and pure air in these cases, speedily restored the patient to perfect health and strength. No other remedy was used.

We might fill many pages with certificates, but as we charge nothing either for advice or medicines, and as paper is rather scarce, we shall be excused if we merely give a few cases for the purpose of showing how to use the charcoal, and how to prepare it, also some of the reasons for its action, in removing

the cause of the disease. We first quote from the pamphlet above referred to, as follows :

"Last Thursday, the 13th (August 1855), on returning home, I was informed that our little child, 18 months old, had the dysentery badly. She had suffered considerably from fever two or three days—had been very restless, with high fever through two nights, but now she had frequent passages of bloody slime, and seemed to be in great distress. Being at a distance from the city, and fearing that the charcoal, if I found any at the drug store, might have been left open, and permitted to absorb impurities, I immediately split a piece of white pine board into strips half an inch to an inch square, and as fast as they were sufficiently burned, took them out of the fire, pulverized and sifted the charcoal through a piece of cotton cloth, took a heaping table-spoonful, stirred it into about three ounces of water, so that it could be freely drawn into and forced out of the syringe, when it was applied, and of course gave instant relief. The child had no more fever, and not another passage until about eighteen hours, when, as I have been informed, the charcoal came away 'in the shape of a small segar,' and was immediately replaced by another similar quantity, which remained twelve or fourteen hours.

"The child was thus cured without taking a particle of medicine.

"A wet cloth had before been placed around the stomach of the child, and cold water injections used, but seemingly without benefit. The water injections alone in this case seemed as useless as the turning of pails of pure water into a cistern where the water was undergoing fermentation, or water upon a mass of putrefying beef."

SECOND CASE.—The writer of the following letter, Mr. Geo. Alexander, is, and has long been well known, as Superintendent at the Novelty Iron Works New York.

*Brooklyn, July 26, 1862.*

..... In August, 1860, I had a severe attack of dysentery, which confined me to my bed 14 days, and was the most severe illness I ever experienced.

The following April, I went to New Orleans. Fearing a return of the disease, from the change of climate, water, &c., I observed the greatest care, ate no vegetables except a few potatoes.

After living there about a month, I became quite unwell. I took such medicines as my physician advised, but grew worse, until my disease settled into dysentery again in its worst form. My case was now becoming desperate, for I was so ill that I could not move about, and suffered severely. My strength was fast failing, and I feared the worst.

After reflecting for some days, I concluded to try charcoal as you prescribed it. I had no confidence in it, as I considered it too simple an article to meet my case; but concluded that if it did no good it could do no harm.

After endeavoring unsuccessfully to purchase some at the drug stores, a piece of white pine board was split, burned, and the coals pulverized, and I took about a gill of the powder mixed with cold water, and drank it, and soon after slept about two hours. On awaking I felt much easier, the severe bearing down pains had almost ceased, and the pain in my back was much relieved.

About six hours after taking the first dose, I took another of about the same quantity; six hours after another, and still another, making nearly a pint in all, in 18 hours.

This was all the medicine I took, after commencing with the charcoal. After taking the first dose, I had but two passages in 24 hours.

It had now become necessary for me to return to New York, and only four days from the time that I took the first charcoal I started for home by rail, and traveled five days and nights continuously, without lying down, and without the slightest inconvenience from disease, or symptom of a relapse. In short, I was cured completely, thoroughly; and ever since, I have had implicit confidence in the power of charcoal, if properly and fearlessly used; and have recommended it to many of my friends, who have tried it, and always with satisfactory results.

Dear Sir, trusting that by disseminating the knowledge



that you possess of this invaluable remedy, you may do a great amount of good, I remain

Yours truly,

GEORGE ALEXANDER.

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THIRD CASE.—It is not necessary that the disease be connected with dysentery, as we have witnessed its beneficial effects under the most varied forms of bowel complaints.

In October, 1859, a gentleman seventy-five years of age was attacked, and after four or five days completely prostrated. He had in that time taken a large quantity of powerful medicines, but it produced no perceptible effect towards checking the disease. For the last six hours involuntary discharges had passed him. When an injection of charcoal was proposed, he remarked that the trouble seemed to be in the pit of his stomach, beyond the reach of an injection, and continued, "I have no more control over my bowels than if they were an old leather tube laid through me." They seemed to be paralyzed, and were it not for the virtues of the charcoal, we should have considered him in a very precarious condition. After swallowing about three heaping table-spoonfuls of fine willow charcoal mixed in water in the course of two hours, without checking it in the least, a wet cloth, covered with two or three thicknesses of dry, having been wrapped around his body, three or four heaping table-spoonfuls of charcoal were given him as an injection. This, of course, stopped it at once. The next day he was walking about, "cured," as he said, "by the charcoal." We received a letter from him a few days since. His health is excellent, though 78 years of age. He took some "charcoal pamphlets," after the above attack, and writes, "We have never had occasion to send for a physician for our family since."

We quote a few words more from the pamphlet above mentioned, which has been the means of introducing this method of purification into many families within the last few years. "Medical writers agree that dysentery is primarily an inflam-



mation of the lower bowel, which, if allowed to go on, soon spreads to other portions of the intestinal canal, ending often in ulceration, gangrene (putrefaction), and death. It is caused principally by breathing impure air, or drinking foul water, the impurities of which act as a ferment, or leaven, in the system. This leaven, in the case of dysentery, commences active fermentation on the inner coatings of the lower bowel. Now just as charcoal infallibly stops fermentation in the cistern of water, by absorbing and decomposing the cause of this ferment, and never fails to sweeten even the mass of dead flesh, if properly applied, by removing and destroying the leaven, so it always has and always will, if properly applied, absorb and decompose the leaven from the human system.

“From its unchangeable character and uniform mode of action, we know that it can never do harm. The moment it is applied it commences its infallible work of absorbing, and in its pores decomposing—burning up the impurities—the poisonous humors—the ferment or leaven, the cause of all the trouble. As an evidence of its powerful aid to the system, the fever at once ceases, showing that nature is relieved, and has no occasion for further struggles.

“The patient feels very weak when the fever leaves; but *for a stimulous, supply pure air*, and let wines and brandies, as well as mercurial preparations, and opium, and morphine, alone, and all will soon be well. If the patient is anxious to gain strength rapidly, he should not only breathe pure air, but should *breathe deeper*, and fuller, and *oftener* than ordinarily. *Expand the chest, work the bellows with vigor*, and soon—the blood enriched with oxygen—the fire will burn, and glow freely in every part of the system. The worn-out particles of matter that have not been removed by the aid of the charcoal, will be burned up by the oxygen in the blood, and thrown off in the form of carbonic acid from the lungs. More fuel will be craved. A healthy appetite will be formed, and with it health and strength and vigor will return to the system.

“Formerly, nothing was so much dreaded in our family as the dysentery; four of our own little brothers and sisters, and one daughter, having been carried away by it, in spite of the efforts of the best physicans, and most careful nursing.

The announcement that a child had the dysentery, fairly caused a shock. It was received with terrible forebodings. But now, since we have seen this remedy so often tested, though we have four little ones under seven years of age, all fear of that disease has vanished, so that when, last fall, a dear child was taken with a spasm, after a day of slight fever, and a few hours after it was discovered that the child had the dysentery, the first involuntary exclamation was, "She is out of danger now, she is safe: it is nothing but the dysentery, and you know we can stop that in three minutes, when we get ready." And we did, of course; and we doubt not thousands of parents will ere long feel ready to bless God for that simple carbon, which is daily manufactured in every cabin in the land. It will be acknowledged to be far more valuable as an application for dysentery than when, in the form of glittering diamonds, it flashes from the queenly crown."

That little flock has since increased in numbers, and we have often been diverted at seeing a little elder brother of a dozen years, in summer when the air is impure, with his half tumbler of fine willow or pine charcoal, wet to the consistency of putty, or his tumbler of charcoal in lumps just quenched, call up the little group around him, and deal out the charcoal to each; the younger ones teasing for more. The only medicine they have ever used, except in cases of colds, or of fever (where scarlet, or typhus was feared, in which cases castor oil, or spiced syrup of rhubarb has been given after it, to move it along), has been this simple absorbent, and sometimes the disinfecting ventilator, for furnishing absolutely pure air, and thus guarding against consumption, and eradicating any tendencies to scrofulous disease, as well as for strengthening and invigorating the system, by purifying the blood, and thus guarding against all diseases: and though they have generally spent their summers in this city of impure air, a more healthy flock cannot be found in any country; and we are informed that the same is true of the other families where this system of purification with charcoal has been introduced in place of the old modes of poisoning.

## **Action of Charcoal in Fever, Dysentery, and all other Malarious and Contagious Diseases.**

It is well known that a few gallons of fresh burned charcoal thrown into a cistern containing twenty or thirty barrels of putrid water, arrests the fermentation and purifies it in two or three days, when it would require twice as many weeks to work itself pure without the aid of charcoal.

Fresh meat, in which putrefaction had actually commenced, and decomposition so far progressed, that the stench from it seemed intolerable, has often been and will always be so far deprived of its leaven, that when it is eaten by the most fastidious, it will be pronounced perfectly sweet, by simply packing it a short time in fresh-burned charcoal. The impurities which act as the ferment or leaven are drawn out of the meat, and decomposed in the charcoal. If the meat is really in a putrescent state or in large masses, it is necessary to re-pack it in fresh coal two or three times in twelve or fifteen hours. If it is then cooked, epicures will consider it as "uncommonly sweet and tender."

*Every particle of fresh-burned charcoal is really a beautiful chemical laboratory, organized by the Creator, for the purpose of decomposing impurities. Take, for example, those two most disgusting products of putrescence, sulphuretted hydrogen (a deadly poison, supposed by some chemists to be the principal cause of bilious fever, ague, &c. It is certainly always present where these fevers are generated), and ammonia. (The sulphuret of ammonia, is supposed by the same chemists, to be the prime cause of typhus, typhoid fevers, &c.) Charcoal attracts to itself ammonia, as a magnet picks up particles of iron, and in its little cells condenses and causes oxygen from the atmosphere to unite with it, and thus forms dilute nitric acid, and holds it there, simple sour water, a harmless substance. In the same way, a cubic inch of charcoal will absorb enough of sulphuretted hydrogen to instantly kill a dozen men, by decomposing the blood in the lungs, if inhaled by them; and combining oxygen with it, forms a few drops of dilute sulphuric acid, which may all be taken with impunity by a single child.*

Thus, charcoal, though simple and harmless as water, in its effects on healthy flesh, is *mighty as the refiner's fire* in its action on flesh that is diseased.

To show the adaptation of charcoal for removing the causes of malarious and contagious diseases, it is only necessary to consider what these causes are.

There has been considerable investigation on the question of the causes of particular diseases, or the particular impurities generating particular diseases. Whatever may be the precise truth on this subject, it has been proved, we think, conclusively, and is generally admitted, that the great majority of diseases that afflict the human race, including dysentery, cholera infantum, summer complaint of children, and most other diseases of the bowels, yellow fever, typhus, typhoid, nervous, gastric, bilious, and intermittent fevers, ague, ship fever, camp fever, scarlatina or scarlet fever, and all the various types of fevers, also small pox, cholera, and every form of pestilence, and some other diseases, are caused by simply inhaling animal or vegetable matter, in a peculiar state of decomposition, or the products of such decomposition floating in the air.

When the blood is particularly impure, and the system prostrated, either from taking cold so as to close the pores, and obstruct the free exhalations of the decaying impurities, or from indigestible food, or from too great a quantity, more than can be properly consumed and worked off, or from careless and constipated habits, or from ventilating with impure air, or sleeping without sufficient ventilation, or perhaps accidentally for a few hours with the head covered, or with the bed clothing so arranged as to form a funnel for conveying the exhalations of the body to the nose, to be reinhaled and again mingled with the blood, or from all these causes combined as is frequently the case; if, then, these malarious or contagious matters are inhaled into the lungs, and there mingled with this impure blood, they become an active leaven, and incite their peculiar kind of fermentation in the fluids of the body very much as the same impurities when washed from the atmosphere into the cistern by showers of rain, incite their peculiar fermentation and putrefaction there. It is evident, too, that the variations in these impurities, and their various combinations,



produce the various forms of disease, and the various types of fevers.

No one, whose opinion is of any value, doubts, for instance, that a peculiar decomposing animal matter, exhaled from a person with the small pox, will generate small pox again, if inhaled by a suitable subject. This has long been acknowledged, and that peculiar decomposing matter has been called contagion of small pox, and the small pox a contagious disease. Just so, when the proper decomposing vegetable matters, or their products, or both, are inhaled, they produce bilious fever in a suitable subject, and these vegetable matters, in such peculiar state of decomposition, as well as ordinary animal matter undergoing this peculiar change, or their products, have been called malaria, and miasm, and the diseases caused by them, malarious, or miasmatic diseases. There is a difference of opinion whether typhus, typhoid, and some other fevers are contagious, or malarious; but there can be no disputing the fact, that these diseases are caused by inhaling diseased animal or vegetable matter, or their products, undergoing a certain species of decomposition. The seat of these diseases (typhus, typhoid, and other types of continued fevers) is found to be the glands on the inner coatings of the bowels, but higher up than those parts where inflammation is first seen in dysentery. After death from these diseases these glands are generally found to be ulcerated and sloughed away.

From this circumstance many pathologists conclude that continued fever is simply inflammation of these glands, and nothing else, just as they conclude that dysentery is simply inflammation of the inner coatings of the lower bowel. In dysentery a large part of the impurities resulting from the fermentation is discharged from the bowels. In typhus, typhoid, and other types of continued fever, a larger part of these impurities remain in the system, and saturate it more thoroughly. Hence the accumulation of foul matter in the mouth, and in every part of the system, somewhat as mould accumulates on moist warm surfaces of meat, or vegetable substances undergoing the putrefactive change; hence the delirium.

Again, the best authorities agree that as dysentery has its seat on the inner coatings of the lower bowel, and continued

fevers have their seat in the glands on the inner coatings of the bowels above, so *yellow fever* has its seat in the inner coatings of the stomach. These are violently inflamed, and in cases that prove fatal, they are completely putrefied. The black vomit is believed to be fragments of the inner coatings of the stomach, separated by mortification. For yellow fever, Dr. Rush prescribed "bleeding the patient two or three times a day, for two or three days, and ten grains of calomel, and fifteen of jalap every six hours, until the alvine canal is sufficiently evacuated." That great and good man sometimes spoke of "the present imperfect state of our knowledge in medicine," and we doubt not that had the virtues of charcoal been as well understood then as now, he would have prescribed a gill or two of fresh burned charcoal, mixed with a little magnesia, or with castor oil, every hour, or oftener, until relief was effected; also a large charcoal poultice around the stomach, and another warm one on the feet as high as the knees. It is certain that if this was done, the inner coatings of the stomach would never have been thrown up, having been separated by mortification. The first gill taken into the stomach upon the seat of the disease, would doubtless relieve the patient within less than five minutes, just as a like dose, when thrown into the lower bowel upon the seat of the disease in dysentery, has so often relieved the patient in less than that time.

Now, the theory that we have for several years believed to be practically established, is this: Just as there is one harmless and powerful absorbent that will infallibly remove these impurities from the cistern of water, and thus prevent fermentation; a substance that will, if properly applied, even after active fermentation has commenced, attract to itself and burn up all the leaven, and quickly render the most disgusting putrefying water, or meat, palatable and pure; so this same, simple, unchangeable absorbent, when properly applied, will surely attract to itself and burn up all the leaven from the human system; and when the causes of the disease are removed, no medicine is needed. Nature, or more properly the laws which an All-wise Creator has made for the purpose, speedily restores the patient. These laws, unless abused, preserve the body in



purity and health. They throw off the decomposing matters, principally, by three methods.

1st. The impurities are burned out by the oxygen of the air inhaled into the lungs, and if we would aid nature in this, and thus prevent scrofulous and other diseases, we must breathe pure air, air rich in oxygen, and breathe deep, and full, and often.

2d. The decaying impurities are thrown out through the pores, or little drains, placed in the skin for that purpose; and if we would aid nature here, we must keep these pores open and actively at work.

We are told, however, that "There is the difficulty: The pores are closed in fevers, and will not work, and can't be made to act properly." But a warm charcoal poultice, applied over the feet to the knees, is really applying a powerful suction pump to several hundred thousand of these drains, and we have frequently seen it speedily unclog them, and relieve the patient, and apparently free the system from more impurities in two hours, than half-a-dozen ordinary boils would in a week.

3d. The intestinal canal has an internal surface as great as that of the outside of the body. The lower portion of this is lined with glands, which conduct the most offensive of the products of the decomposition, of the normal waste of the system, from the blood into the bowels; or, as well expressed by a leading physiologist, their object seems to be "To eliminate from the blood those putrescent matters which would otherwise accumulate in it to its injury; whether as the result of the normal waste of the system, or as the products of the action of substances introduced into it, which operate as ferments."—*Carpenter's Principles of Comparative Physiology.*

Now if we would aid nature, these impurities should not only be removed from the blood into the bowels, but should also be removed from the bowels as soon as possible after they are deposited there; otherwise they may be, and very often are, when from ignorance or neglect allowed to accumulate, reabsorbed in the system, to corrupt and poison the body, and aid in engendering the most fatal diseases.

If to each of these glands or drains we apply the powerful suction pump, charcoal, it would alone draw out these decom-

posing impurities; and it certainly aids nature immensely in discharging them. It also burns them up as fast as withdrawn, which is in effect much the same as if they had been thrown directly away, as it prevents their reabsorption.

Now we will admit that we do not know precisely, neither is it necessary that we should know what the leaven is composed of, that causes each one of the above diseases, before we attempt to remove it, any more than that we should analyze each cistern of water that is fermenting, to find out precisely what impurities are causing the fermentation in that particular cistern, before we attempt to purify it with charcoal. *It is enough that we do know, that charcoal attracts to itself and destroys all leaven, all ferment.* And when we see a man sick of fever, no matter by what name the fever is called, we know the cause of his trouble to be, that *a ferment is working in his system*, and producing its results. Consequently he loses several pounds of flesh each day. This flesh is decomposing, or being burned in every one of his sore muscles, and in all the fluids of his body; and to make matters worse, millions of the pores or drains, by which the products of this decomposition should be discharged by the skin and bowels, are clogged up. The lungs alone are free and active, and though they labor and pant with all their power, in their efforts to perform their vicarious work for the pores and glands, they cannot throw off the whole of the normal waste.

And now, saturated as the poor patient becomes with such a mass of rotting or burning corruption, can we wonder that he is hot or feverish, and restless, that he suffers intensely, and is even delirious? That often the vital force is overcome, and he sinks, or that active decomposition of whole organs commences, and the body dies?

Thank God there is a remedy for this vast amount of distress and death in reach of all his creatures. Harmless, and even inactive as it is, where its aid is not required, it is a remedy omnipotent in its action, wherever it is applicable, if only *properly applied*.

## How shall we apply the Charcoal?

Very intelligent men sometimes remark in effect as follows: I never take any responsibility myself in prescribing for disease in my family. When any of them are unwell, we let them work it off if they can; but when they really get down sick, we send for our physician. Again, these persons ask, if one is taken sick, shall I prescribe charcoal without knowing what ails him, or must I wait, as my physician does, to let the disease develop itself, so as to apply the remedy properly? \* We answer, don't wait an hour,—commence as soon as the child is unwell, and combat the symptoms. It is not necessary that you know the name of the disease that is about to take possession; you have a remedy that can never poison. It is a mere purifier, and purification is never considered injurious in any case. No matter what disease is being developed, whether of the bowels, or fever, in some one of its many forms, or even small pox, or pestilence; commence at once: Purify! Purify! Purify! and when you have done this, the laws which an All-wise Creator has made for the purpose, will work the cure. Any intelligent parent may use this remedy, so as to expel the first intrusion of disease. If the child has a bowel complaint, stop it at once with the charcoal. If taking it as directed by the mouth does not gradually check it, or, if the child is too

\* What would be thought of an educated man, who, when the water in his cistern began to ferment, and he was advised to throw some charcoal into it, should answer: "I never take any responsibility myself. If my cistern gets much worse I will send for the chemist." And what would be thought of his chemist, if when called he should say, "I must first analyze and find out what are the impurities that are acting as the ferment here, then I can apply chemicals that will neutralize them without poisoning the water. But before I analyze it will be necessary to let it ferment a little longer, so as to enable me to decide what those impurities are?" Or what would be thought of his chemistry, if he should decide that it was necessary to let the tainting meat ferment a day longer before attempting to restore it to purity and sweetness, and should then frequently fail? As our child is of more value than a cistern of fermenting water, or a mass of decomposing meat, we should consider such deluded farmer or chemist fortunate by the side of the parent or physician, whose system of medicine compels him to wait till the disease is more firmly established before he dare prescribe for removing its cause.

low, or too young to swallow it, stop it as suddenly as you please with the charcoal injection. You need not fear any evil result.\* It does not, like preparations containing opium, check the disease by merely paralyzing the action of the bowels, and leaving the impurities, causing the disease, still in the system: neither does it, like an astringent, act by closing up the thousands of little glands that discharge the impurities of the blood into the bowels, thus forcibly shutting back in the blood the decomposing matters that are causing the mischief, there to rankle and rot, and cause fever, and generate disease: Neither does it, like preparation from mercury, or lead, so highly recommended by many of the faculty for summer complaint of children; or, like nitrate of silver, or spirits of turpentine, or many of the other poisons given under the name of medicine, act by irritating, or gnawing and scraping the glands, and thus "increasing the secretions," as the lash or spur rouses the worn-out horse. On the contrary, it increases the secretions by a milder, gentler, and surer method. It relieves by simply drawing out through the glands the decomposing matters, the poisonous humors, the cause of all the trouble, and destroying them. Merely removing the cause of the disease, it can do no harm.

Again, if a person is taken suddenly with more or less prostration and fever, and you do not know whether it is simply a cold, caused by a sudden check of perspiration and about to develop itself in pleurisy, or congestion of the lungs, or some other part; or, whether owing to poisons previously inhaled, the cold is about to prove the exciting cause of scarlet or typhus fever, or some other disease; or, whether it is a case of severe poisoning with contagious matters, that are about to develop continued fever or measles, or plague, in some form. It matters

\* Of course good nursing is required, and while the child is teething the gums should be often examined, and, if inflamed or swollen, they should be frequently, sometimes daily, cut, so as to bleed. Any parent can do this by first winding a piece of tape around the blade of a sharp penknife, the point only being left exposed. It is not necessary to cut deep, only to bleed the swollen gum. The child should also have all the cold water it will drink, but with coals first quenched, and left in it until used. The diet should be simple and easily digestible.



not what disease is threatening, a prompt, vigorous course of *purification*, will eradicate the leaven, before it has so far leavened the lump as to establish, for its symptoms, or for the disease, a character or name.

In such cases purify as thoroughly as necessary, both by outward and inward applications. If there is much fever, put a warm fresh-burned charcoal poultice on the feet and legs, as high as the knees; wrap them warm and keep them warm. Owing to its attraction for the decaying impurities, it will draw them out and open these hundreds of thousands of pores at once. In a very few minutes perspiration will start from other parts, in the region of the poultice, and rapidly spread, until soon a real healthy flow will be pouring from every part of the body. Second (or first if more convenient), give from a tablespoonful to a gill if powdered, or three times that measure if not powdered, of fresh-burned charcoal (three quarts of lump charcoal after being rubbed down very fine, measure but one quart), and if the bowels have not been overactive, give castor oil (one to three tablespoonfuls), or syrup of rhubarb to carry it off. Third—if the case is very severe, inject from a gill to a quart of water, bloodwarm, containing as much very fine charcoal as will flow freely from the syringe, mixed with flax-seed jelly or starch, or other lubricator, and wash away, and renew if necessary, every three or four hours. Also renew the poultices as often, if the patient is not relieved, and cured in less than that time; as he will surely be if taken in season. Treat him somewhat as you would treat a mass of meat, that was saturated, as he is, with the products of decomposing animal matter. Apply the charcoal freely inside, so as to draw off or aid nature in removing the decomposing products by the glands in the bowels: and very abundantly outside, so as to draw off or aid nature in removing them, by the pores of the skin, and you will soon have him sweetened, purified, and restored to health and strength. In most instances, if taken in season, an application by one of the above modes will be sufficient.

We have known of many cases that seem to prove conclusively that the products of decomposition, which are ordinarily thrown off by one set of organs, may, by the agency of char-

coal be all removed by another set of organs, and the dose is given by the mouth because it is most convenient.

There are other modes of applying the charcoal, which may be as convenient, and answer as well in certain circumstances; we have in mild cases used it without even taking the trouble to crush it. To prevent blacking the bed, we wrapped the large dry pieces which had just been reburned, so that there was but one thickness of very light muslin, on their flat sides, and laid them around against the body of the patient. We once placed nearly a peck in contact with a little yearling, whom its mother informed us was "*very sick*." It had been merely poisoned, with foul, hot city air, while teething. The child slept quietly two hours or more; when it commenced playing with a piece of charcoal, before its mother had noticed that it was awake. Surprised and delighted, she of course quickly bent over her darling, and was met with an inquiring look, and an urgent exclamation of "*Bick! Bick!*" (Bread.) The little one was hungry. A piece of dead flesh was never benefited more by charcoal in two hours, than was that child. It was perfectly restored.

The nearer the charcoal is placed in contact with the surfaces, the better. The only object in crushing it is so that it can be applied more nearly in contact, and thus be made to absorb from the pores more powerfully, or draw off from the drains more rapidly.

### Our Army.

If each of our soldiers would, every morning when he cooks his rations, put half a pint of fresh-burned, sound, soft wood-coal lumps, or one-third that measure of finely pulverized, into his canteen of water, and whenever he drinks during the day eat a little of the coal; it would put a stop at once to all bowel diseases and malarious fevers, and all other diseases caused by impure water and malarious air. A cubic inch of coal would deprive all the water he would need, of its decomposing animal and vegetable matter, that works so much mischief; while the dozen cubic inches that is left of the half pint would be more than enough to destroy all the impurities that he would take



in from the most malarious air. He should also observe great care that his bowels are regular. If he had neglected to keep the system pure, and was consequently sick, the charcoal must be applied thoroughly, externally and internally, until it has removed the leaven and purified the system as above directed.

Charcoal alone, properly used, would thus, we believe, contribute more to the efficiency of our army, in the unhealthy South, than an addition of one hundred thousand men, besides saving many valuable lives.

### Charcoal for Burns.

In the pamphlet above referred to, we published several pages on "*Charcoal for Burns*," giving the particulars of cases where it had relieved the patient in a very few minutes; and concluding that "a given measure of fresh-burned wood charcoal aids nature more in three hours, by drawing out the dead decomposing matters through the burn, re-opening the thousands and myriads of crisped-up pores, and thus restoring a healthy action to the parts, than twice that amount of scorched flour, in twice that length of time, or more than ten times that amount of fresh flour in a day. Another advantage: in burns where the skin is gone, the little that adheres when the charcoal is changed can do no harm, as it never sours; while flour ferments, whether fresh or scorched, and in such burns must inevitably become injurious. The charcoal is not only unchangeable, and therefore can never, under any circumstances, do harm, but works by laws that never change, and must always be beneficial. It will not only help the vital forces to rid the system of the impurities that rankle and poison, and become the principal cause of pain and trouble from a burn; but as has been often proved in masses of dead flesh, when properly applied, even were the vital forces powerless for this object, the charcoal would alone, unaided, draw out all that decomposing filth ordinarily thrown off by exhalation, and clean out all the putrefying rubbish of the burn; thus leaving no work for the system but to rebuild."

It is not necessary to give particulars again here. We have heard of several instances of its use for burns since those above referred to. The universal report has been, "it acted like a charm," or "it relieved all pain in five or ten minutes," and the wounds have in all cases healed as soon as other wounds ordinarily heal.

It is applied in the form of a powder, covering the wound from an eighth of an inch to half an inch thick, and renewed once in six or twelve hours, or sooner, if pain recommences.

Death from burns extending over a considerable portion of the body results, we believe, from the joint action of several causes.

1st. It is well known that "the perspiratory fluid contains a considerable amount of solid matter, the proportion of which is sometimes as much as  $12\frac{1}{2}$  parts in 1,000. The greatest part of this consists of animal matter, in a state of incipient decomposition."—*Carpenter's Principles of Comparative Physiology*.

So great is the generation of this decomposing matter, and so indispensable its discharge by the capillaries, that when a horse was wrapped in oiled silk the joinings of the silk so closed as to cover him completely, with openings only for his nose, eyes, &c., and glued tightly to his skin around these openings; the whole covered with varnish so as to prevent the escape of the exhalations; the capillaries soon ceased to throw off impurities, a malignant fever of course set in, and the animal died in a few hours.

The same experiment has been tried with the rabbit and the pig, with the same result. We are also told that on the accession of Leo X. to the Papal throne, among other performances, a child was gilded (covered all over with gold leaf) to represent the golden age. Of course the child died in a few hours, very much to the astonishment of the physicians and other scholars of that time.

So it has frequently happened, that persons not considered disabled or dangerously burned, have for a time aided in attending to the wounded and dying, or have exclaimed, as we are told the engineer at the explosion on the Great Eastern did, "Attend to the others, I am all right," and yet, like him, have had the surfaces so extensively injured that they have been the first to die, poisoned, as we believe, for want of acting capillaries to discharge the worn-out particles of putrefying matter which are constantly being generated in every living body. Immersion in a mass of fresh-burned and powdered charcoal would, we believe, relieve such cases at once, by

drawing out through the pores, or through the dead mass, those little particles from the decaying animal matter that do the mischief, and thus performing that indispensable work that was accomplished by the capillaries before the burn took place.

Again, if the burn is not so extensive as to produce death in a few hours, from the above cause—the surfaces that are destroyed being kept at a temperature of about  $100^{\circ}$ , begin to putrefy, and this putrid matter is often absorbed into the system, where it also acts as a ferment—and mingling with the worn-out putrefying particles of the body that should have been thrown off by the exhalations, they form a powerful leaven that prostrates the strongest man, and returns his body back to dust. But here the charcoal is ready again. This decaying animal matter, that would poison the system, is precisely what it delights to feed upon. As soon as it begins to decay, the charcoal draws it out of the system and greedily devours it, and digests, or decomposes it. It thus *aids nature most powerfully*, by performing the principal and by far the most difficult parts of the work of restoration that the system would have been called on to perform, if the charcoal had not been applied.

### Charcoal for Erysipelas.

That pamphlet also contained one or two pages on Charcoal for *Erysipelas*, and though we had never heard of its having been used for this purpose, and judged of its effects only by its nature and the nature of the disease, several cases have since been reported to us, where it has been used according to the directions there given, and in every case with complete success.

We repeat the directions here: “Lay a liberal poultice of fresh-burned crushed charcoal, not only on the diseased part, but over all that region, and over the body generally, to reduce the fever by *purifying* the blood. Do not stop applying it as soon as the pain has ceased. Put fresh poultices upon the inflamed part in two or three hours. If there is much discharge of acrid fluid, change the poultice in contact with it in half an hour. Continue to apply it liberally, no matter if it is a great deal of work to prepare the fresh coal; no matter if it does black the face, and limbs, and bed. ‘It is

better than worse;' and if it is not quite so 'gintee' as it is to swallow a little white powder, and perhaps have a little white flour sprinkled on to sour there, and thus increase the inflammation, you have the consolation that it is a clean smut—almost pure diamond—and it will surely cure by drawing out the poisonous humors, if properly applied, and then it is very easily washed off."

"The bowels should, of course, be kept open with charcoal and magnesia, or castor oil. The *diet* should be very low, and the patient should breathe freely of *pure air*."

### Charcoal Instead of Mercurials for Diseases of the Liver.

Many thousands in our country imagine that as they are "of a bilious temperament," or living in a bilious climate, they must take a blue pill once in about so often, "to act on the liver." But before we give mercury, we should ask, What is the cause of the failure of the liver to properly perform its functions? and can this cause be removed without irritating any part of the system? The principal office of the liver seems to be to separate some of the products of the decomposition of the elements of the body (the normal waste) from the venous blood, and with these products form bile. If the air is malarious, the sulphureted hydrogen and ammonia have, by acting on the iron in the blood, so impoverished it, that it does not take up a sufficient amount of oxygen to burn up its share of the normal waste. This waste thus sometimes accumulates, ferments, becomes poisonous, and the liver cannot properly manufacture bile from this diseased material. Again, if too much or improper food is eaten, the liver cannot prepare sufficient bile for working it up. The food becomes sour, ferments, and even adds poison to the fountain from which the liver obtains its material for forming bile. Now we cannot say that calomel does not act on the liver, but we very much doubt whether it does do any good, except by arresting or greatly diminishing the process of digestion, so that there being little or no chyme formed to unite with the bile, little or no bile is consumed, and it has time to accumulate. It also clears out the stomach and alimentary canal, and irritates the glands in the bowels, and causes them to discharge more profusely; thus purifying the blood more rapidly. But why give poisons even if they will scourge or "stimulate" the liver? Is it not better to purify the blood by a proper use of charcoal, and no



longer require the liver to manufacture bile from poisonous materials? Should not such persons also breathe more air and eat less food? But if they will eat heartily, should they not eat more of vegetables or other light food, and less of meat? It is certainly better to build up the system by preserving the blood pure with charcoal, or by breathing pure air, rather than to tear it down now and then with a poison, for the purpose of scouring it out, and thus purifying it.

### **How shall we Prepare the Charcoal?**

To prepare charcoal for the purpose of drawing off impurities from the surface, and opening the pores in fevers and colds, we burn white pine or other soft, sound wood, quench in a little water, throw into a clean kettle, tub, or box for a mortar, and with the square end of a hard-wood stick for a pestle, crush most of it quite fine, and apply before it cools. Lumps as large as grains of corn, or larger, will do no harm, provided there is enough of the fine to fill up the interstices between them.

If for application, where the skin has been destroyed by a burn, or for erysipelas, sift and use only the finest, and apply it cold.

For inward use, a very convenient mode of preparing it for the majority of cases, if taken in season, is as follows: Burn willow, poplar, chestnut, white pine, or other soft, sound wood, quench in a little pure water, and eat it; children frequently become fond of it in this way. Some prefer to let the coal die out without throwing it in water, and eat it dry. But it should never be left for hours exposed to the air before it is used.

When it is to be pulverized for inward use, scatter it on clean stone or iron until it is extinguished, or smother it in a tight clean vessel. Then in a clean iron vessel (not brass or copper), crush it, and rub it down as fine as possible.

To sift it without raising a dust, we let a carpenter make a small, tight box, like a common chest, 18 inches long, 10 inches wide, and 8 inches deep inside, with a tight lid.

For a sieve to work inside this chest, we make the sides of a box 12 inches long, 9 inches wide outside, and 4 inches deep.

To support the sieve in the chest, fasten a strip for a handle, 2 inches wide,  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick, and 32 inches long over the centre of its top lengthwise. Then cut recesses in the centre of the top of each end of the chest, for this handle to slide in, of the same size, that is, 2 inches wide and  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep. Strain thin muslin over the bottom of the sieve-box, and tack it near the top to prevent leaks. Now we can shake the sieve back and forth by the handle which projects at all times out of both ends of the chest. The dust all settles in the bottom of the chest. It is well to prepare several quarts at a time. After sifting it, lift out the sieve, shut the chest again, raise one end, rap it to collect the coal in one corner. Then pack it into a wide-mouthed bottle or jar having an *air-tight* stopper, or cover, and keep it *excluded from the air*. It should be packed away from the air as soon as possible after it is burned.

As a preventive of disease, or for young children or those who have no teeth, or when but little is to be taken, drop living, soft, sound wood coals into a pitcher of water, and crush them there; cool, if necessary, with ice, stir, and strain as needed through a piece of open muslin, and let all their drink be this blackened water. This mode is good as far as it goes. It is an excellent preventive of disease, but the sick patient does not always get as much coal as is needed, and the amount given cannot easily be known.

Be very careful about purchasing charcoal that is prepared for sale, no matter how prettily it is sealed up and labeled.

## Objections.

SOME may deem it unsafe to swallow charcoal by the tablespoonful, fearing that it will form hard masses and obstructions in the bowels. But there is no instance on record where this has been the case, though persons have often acquired the habit of eating it quite freely.\* It is true that magnesia, pre-

\* This is probably the most common objection raised. We have heard of several cases where the sick have been restrained from using it, by the positive assertion of their physician that charcoal very often formed obstructions in the bowels, and killed the patient. Others, after listening to the objection, conclude



pared chalk and other mineral absorbents so much prescribed, form salts with the acids they chance to meet in the stomach, sometimes completely changing all their original properties. Magnesia is thus sometimes changed in the stomach to magnesian limestone, and those habitually using it are often found with calcareous deposits (limestone) in their intestines.

From the same cause, prepared chalk, if not properly carried off, sometimes concretes or turns to limestone; subnitrate of bismuth is changed to a carbonate of bismuth. But charcoal can never be made to form obstructions by absorbing impurities. Again, just as hair-balls are formed in cattle by the felting of hair together in masses, so the various indigestible substances that can be felted, and are sometimes swallowed, as fragments of thread, hairs, woody knots from pears, etc., have been found felted or massed together, and obstructing the bowels in the human system. Also, where oatmeal is much used, as in parts of Scotland, obstructions are often found, made up almost entirely of little beards of oats, which have gradually accumulated around some lump as a nucleus, and worked in among each other, thus forming large solid masses. But charcoal can never felt, nor when taken in reasonable quantities into the stomach, mass, so as to form obstructions: on the contrary, owing to its affinity for decomposing impurities, each particle of charcoal seems to be separated from every other particle, and becomes not only saturated with filth, but covered with a slippery coat, and its tendency seems to be to scatter and diffuse itself uniformly among the contents of the bowels rather than to concrete.

A friend of ours, Professor A., several years ago, lived for a week on bread, half flour and half coal, and informs us that he "ate heartily every day, ate nothing else,—and never felt better in his life." The coarsely-ground coal kept by apothecaries

to run the risk and use the charcoal. For example: the gentleman, whose name appears on page 4, remarked: "My physician asked me if I was aware of the great risk I was running;" said he, "persons have often got into the habit of eating charcoal and such like stuff, and there is a pocket-like sack hanging down between the large and small intestines, and this stuff has deposited in a hard mass in that pocket and killed them;" I, however, concluded that if there was danger, I would run the risk, though I confess I could not help thinking that possibly he was more concerned about his own pocket than about mine."

caries for tooth-powders, has been by medical authorities prescribed on account of its roughness, just as brown bread is prescribed, for constipation: "one to three table-spoonfuls of charcoal every half hour or hour with good effects;" and though we have seen cases recorded where persons habitually using brown bread for a long time, have suffered from deposits of silica in the bowels (the silica came from the bran of the wheat), we never refused to eat brown bread for this reason; we would as soon object to our children eating blackberries, because they are largely made up of indigestible seeds, which might deposit, as to their eating pure fresh-burned charcoal, which immediately mixes so thoroughly with the contents of the stomach and bowels.

*Second Objection.*—We have heard of several cases where persons have been puzzled by being bluffed by their old friend and physician, with the indignant exclamation, "If your watch is out of order, you send it to the jeweler to get it repaired; but when your child becomes disordered, you try to tinker it up yourself; probably because you don't value it as highly as you do your watch." *Answer.*—It is true we depend on the watchmaker to repair our watch; so, if our bodies are deranged, we depend on the Creator of our bodies and spirits to restore them by means of His laws, and not on poisons dealt out by finite man, who, so far from being able to construct the mind and body, *cannot even understand the connection between them.* We simply remove the cause of the disorder by means of an absorbent. Those laws, made by an all-wise Creator for the purpose, *restore* the patient.

*Third Objection.*—Charcoal has long been used and prescribed by medical men; and if it possessed the virtues here claimed, those virtues would long since have been discovered. *Answer.*—It has long been used to remove the offensive odor from sloughing sores. A single poultice, if it happens to be fresh burned, does this, and then it is thrown aside. It has also been recommended as one of the remedies for the poor who are not able to pay for the services of a physician.

Dr. Watson, of King's College, London, in his "Principles

and Practice of Physic," a work of high authority, and used as a text-book in the principal colleges in this country, after giving some thirty pages on the subject of intermittent fever and ague, remarks: "These, then, *quina* and *arsenic*, are the two sheet-anchors to which we trust in the cure of ague. A host of other remedies, I say, have had their praises sung. There is strong evidence of the efficacy of some of them; they are cheap and easily accessible, and above all, safe; and, therefore, in agueish districts they may, with much propriety and benefit, be recommended to the poorer classes, or distributed, by Lady Bountifuls."

After an article recommending willow bark, and another recommending the *web of the black spider*, which inhabits barns, stables, and cellars, he remarks: "Charcoal is another substance which has been found effectual for the cure of intermittent fevers. You may find an account of it in the tenth volume of the 'Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal.' It would seem to be especially useful in those cases in which there is a marked disturbance of the digestive organs, nausea, flatulence hiccup, diarrhoea, or dysentery. It is said generally to cure the complaint by the time two drachms of it have been taken. It may be given in doses of ten or twenty grains, in arrowroot, or with a few grains of rhubarb. If the power of this substance should be confirmed by future observations, a cheap remedy would thus be open to the poor. A clergyman of my acquaintance assures me that he seldom fails to cure agues among his parishioners, by administering to them the snuffs of candles, which he takes care to have collected. He does not inform them of what his black powder consists. I presume that its virtue may proceed from the charcoal it contains, unless it is derived from the confidence his flock is accustomed to place in his specific. The very same remedy, the snuff of a candle, is mentioned by Lind." He mentions other remedies to show that the imagination can aid much in curing this disease, and concludes that "*the undoubted success*, in many cases, of *charms* must be referred to the principle of *faith*. The patient recovers because he firmly believes in your power to cure him," etc.

Now, we should not expect that "*the snuff of a candle*," as he calls it, would do much towards absorbing the leaven

from one hundred and fifty pounds of flesh and fluids, or that an individual who has the ague, and is so saturated with the decomposing impurities that are fermenting in his system, that the very atmosphere around him becomes disgusting when he perspires, would be perceptibly purified by simply swallowing ten or twenty grains (that is, about half a teaspoonful) of charcoal at a time, until two drachms (that is, about a tablespoonful) is taken.

But the clergyman above referred to, took care to have the snuffs of candles collected, and doubtless gave them more liberally, for they seldom failed to eradicate the poison causing the disease. Yet some late writers, who condescend to mention his use of this remedy, drop it with the remark, that "probably in this case the imagination performed the cure." The trouble with those who have written on this subject has been, that they did not at all understand the nature of the action of the charcoal. If they had, they would rather have told us that the charcoal of the cotton and oil of the candle, is, like animal charcoal more powerful than the same measure of that from wood, and that every grain absorbed and decomposed some of the ferment, the cause of the disease. Wood charcoal, is now considerably used in this inefficient way in the West. Some ascribe its virtues to its "wonderful electrical effects;" some seem to look upon it rather as a charm, than as a material for drawing out, and decomposing or burning up the ferment, the cause of the disease. We will give one fact in illustration of this statement:

In the winter of 1857 we spent a few weeks in western Ohio. One evening an old gentleman came into the hotel, and sat down by the stove, almost hugging it. He had "got the shakes." "When I get home," said he, "I'll cure it short." Hoping for a subject on whom we could try our specific again, we patronizingly inquired "Will you please to tell us, sir, how you cure the ague?"

*Ans.* "My old woman (and he paused and shivered again for a few seconds) takes a bowl of milk (another pause and shiver) and pounds up some coal and stirs it in and I drink it."

Surprised and delighted to find one there who knew some-



thing of our favorite remedy, we immediately proposed to take some coal from the fire, telling him that it was good, sound wood that was burning. He however shook his head. We then proposed to get some good white-pine splints and burn them for him, but no, he would "be home to-morrow night." After talking with him about the cause of its action, we concluded that he believed his "old woman and the bowl of milk" had as much to do with the cure as the charcoal. The next day we mentioned the circumstance to an old friend, a leading physician of the city, whom we met there for the first time since he left the Medical College, fifteen years before, and inquired, whether he had ever used charcoal for ague and fevers? "Yes," he said, "he had often used it *in combination* with other remedies." When asked what he considered the *modus operandi* of its action, he attributed it to "*its powerful electrical effects.*"

In justice to him, we must add, that he gave charcoal by the whole grain, as he gave calomel, and opium, and not by the fraction of a grain, as we have seen arsenic and strychnine prescribed. Though we have sometimes purchased very good charcoal at the drug stores (we have always found the fine willow charcoal, prepared and sealed by Chas. Ellis & Co., druggists, Philadelphia, a good article), yet as charcoal is not a drug, very few druggists keep it, except for tooth-powder. It is often brought from the foundry where it is ground for the purpose of dusting the molds, preparatory to casting, and is frequently saturated with impurities, even before it is ground, until it is little better than so much dirt; or, sometimes, it is obtained in a good condition from the powder mills, but kept by the druggists in the keg that brought it, or in large jars with loose covers, or even poured into a drawer, where it lies for months exposed to the air. We have heard educated men among them assert, that exposure to the air did not injure it: that it was good for tooth-powders, and nothing else. Sometimes, however, these men filled a few vials with this stuff, labeled them very prettily, and sealed them "because their customers would have it sealed."

Now, the fact that charcoal has been used so inefficiently in these minute doses, and often after being saturated with impurity, is certainly no evidence that it is not a perfect panacea, if it is only properly prepared and used as above directed.

In conclusion, we may say we have materials for a large volume on subjects here referred to, which we might possibly have published, particularly for physicians, had we not known how many years of hard labor it has always taken to overcome "the *vis inertia* of the profession." We acknowledge that we have here spoken rather plainly of the systems and practices of some of our medical friends. But we have done it for the benefit of our race. As health is a subject of vast importance to every one, we have endeavored to write so that all can understand.

There will, doubtless, be a time in the future, when the "science of medicine" will be truly a science—one that can be depended upon with safety. Then it will be the aim of the enlightened parent and physician, to assist nature in her efforts to expel the cause of the disease. Multitudes of the thoughtful, the intelligent, and unprejudiced, have long been convinced that this cannot best be done by allopathy, that is, by getting up another morbid or diseased condition, by means of a contrary poison, to drive out the first disease; nor by homeopathy, that is by exciting a very little more of the same disease, by means of minute doses of like poison; nor by any other pathy, that is, morbid or diseased condition. It is certain that nature restores by first discharging the impurities that cause the disease, by the channels constructed for that purpose, and is it not as certain that an agent that attracts those same impurities with irresistible force by the same channels, and in the same direction, is just the aid that she requires?

Again, nature purifies, but never poisons to ward off or cure disease. And if we would imitate nature, or aid nature, should we not purify, but never poison, for this purpose? Hundreds of cases where this system of purification has been tried, and always with success, have demonstrated, we think, the truth of our conclusions.

We have one favor to ask of the reader. It is that he or she will report to us cases where fresh burned charcoal is used in diseases; the condition of the patient; the mode of using it, and the result. We never receive a fee in any case; but we wish to accumulate facts. Truth is our aim. The welfare of our race is our object, and the privilege of doing something



to lessen the miseries and ameliorate the condition of our fellow-men is our reward. This reward may be secured by any one who has the facts, and who will take the trouble to report them plain and unvarnished. As we have no evidence of the truth of statements given over false signatures, we have to request that you please sign your true name and residence. Neither your name or letters shall in any case be published without your written consent.

Yours truly,

A. S. LYMAN,

212 Second Avenue, New York.

